

# The Aces On Bridge by Bobby Wolff

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## The Aces on Bridge: Sunday, January 17, 2010

by Bobby Wolff on January 31st, 2010

*Dear Mr. Wolff:*

*Do you recommend using trumps just to show suit preference, or can they signal other things as well?*

– Signal Corps, Davenport, Iowa

**ANSWER:** Some people play a trump echo as indicating a desire to ruff; others use it to show an odd number of trumps. However, a trump signal to show suit-preference is far more useful. You can convey the desire to ruff just as well by giving appropriate suit preference. Moreover, your number of trumps normally becomes apparent very early on in the hand for other reasons and is rarely critical to the defense.

*Dear Mr. Wolff:*

*When your partner opens a weak two-bid in hearts and the next hand doubles, what is the*

*right action with ♠ A-J-3, ♥ K-4, ♦ A-Q-3-2,*

*♣ J-10-3-2? If you redoubled, would you do the same with a heart less and a spade more?*

– Off and Running, Albany, Ga.

**ANSWER:** In my opinion redoubling announces ownership of the deal and asks your partner to act — normally by doubling the opponents but occasionally by rebidding his suit with extra trump length and no defense. If you had a 4-1-4-4 shape and were about to double the opponents wherever they stopped, you would pass, then double, and not give partner the chance to act.

**ANSWER:** Recently some bridge-themed action novels have come out; I can't whole-heartedly recommend any of them as a great read. But in my youth I read "Duplicate Death" by Georgette Heyer and "Cards on the Table" by Agatha Christie, both of which took bridge seriously. Comic author S.J. Simon was a superb player, and Somerset Maugham a very keen one. Both wrote fiction that touched on the game.

*Dear Mr. Wolff:*

*If you were third to speak, holding ♠ A-9-6-4-2,*

*♥ K-10-3, ♦ 7-3-2, ♣ K-2, would you open?*

*Would you overcall an opening bid on your right? Does the vulnerability matter?*

– Active Andy, Danville, Ill.

**ANSWER:** I must confess that whether it is winning tactics or not, I would open this hand at all vulnerabilities. I realize that this may trigger a penalty larger than our opponents' partscore or game, but I feel that if I do not bid, I make life too easy for my opponents. Yes, I would overcall any bid on my right — one cannot afford to lose the spade suit. It is not so clear to bid with the same hand but with a diamond or heart suit, and I would NEVER overcall at the two-level.

*Dear Mr. Wolff:*

*I was confused with a recent answer to a "Bid With the Aces" quiz. Your answer was that if you*

Dear Mr. Wolff:

Is there any literary work that portrays bridge seriously as opposed to mentioning the subject in passing?

– Bookworm, Cincinnati, Ohio

*opened one club and jumped to four clubs after a response of one spade, you had six clubs and four spades. Is this a convention and is it in standard use?*

– Missing the Point, Texarkana, Texas

**ANSWER:** Yes, it is commonly understood that this sequence shows good clubs (six of them at least) and four spades, with the values to drive to game. This helps partner envision a source of tricks for his side in a spade slam.

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If you would like to contact Bobby Wolff, e-mail him at [bobbywolff@mindspring.com](mailto:bobbywolff@mindspring.com). Reproduced with permission of United Feature Syndicate, Inc., Copyright 2009.

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